



From the desk of the Registered Dietitian: Rachel Robinson, RD, Chief Clinical Dietitian

November is National Diabetes Month

Managing diabetes involves maintaining a healthy weight, making healthy food choices, being physically active, and taking medications as prescribed. The following are 4 steps to managing diabetes from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK).

Step 1: Learn about diabetes- What is Type 2 diabetes?

If you have Type 2 diabetes, your body does not make or use insulin well. You may need to take pills or insulin to help control your diabetes. Type 2 is the most common type of diabetes.

Step 2: Know your diabetes ABCs.

A for the A1C test (A-one-C). The A1C is a blood test that measures your average blood sugar level over the past three months. It is different from the blood sugar checks you do each day. The A1C goal for many people with diabetes is below 7. Ask what your goal should be.

B for Blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of your blood against the wall of your blood vessels. If your blood pressure gets too high, it makes your heart work too hard. It can cause a heart attack or stroke, and damage your kidneys and eyes. The blood pressure goal for most people with diabetes is below 140/90.

C for Cholesterol. There are two kinds of cholesterol in your blood: LDL and HDL. LDL or “bad” cholesterol can build up and clog your blood vessels. It can cause a heart attack or stroke. HDL or “good” cholesterol helps remove the “bad” cholesterol from your blood vessels.

Step 3: Learn how to live with diabetes.

- Stay active.
- Take your medications as directed, even when you feel good.
- Learn the right amount of carbohydrates you should have each meal. With your Home Delivered Meals, you may need to save the bread or dessert for later.
- At meals, fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables, one quarter with a lean protein, such as beans, or chicken or turkey without the skin, and one quarter with a whole grain, such as brown rice or whole wheat pasta.
- Drink water instead of juice and regular soda.
- Eat foods with more fiber, such as whole grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta.
- Check your feet every day for cuts, blisters, red spots, and swelling.
- Brush your teeth and floss every day to keep your mouth, teeth, and gums healthy.
- Keep track of your blood sugar. You may want to check it one or more times a day.

Step 4: Get routine care to stay healthy.

See your health care team at least twice a year to find and treat any problems early.